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RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 2904  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 3322  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 5770  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2454  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHMFISS/EUCOM POLAD VAIHINGEN GE  
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 000888

AF/S FOR B. WALCH  
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU  
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS  
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR L.DOBINS AND J. HARMON  
COMMERCE FOR ROBERT TELCHIN

SIPDIS

E.O.12958: N/A  
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SUBJECT: ZIM NOTES 11-09-2009

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[1](#)1. SUMMARY  
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Topics of the week:

SADC Summit-MDC to Reengage...  
Warthogs Delay Ambassador's Arrival...  
...And May Have Prevented Abduction of Labor Leader...  
Nkomo Nominated for VP Slot...  
Zim Can Still Export Diamonds, With Greater Oversight...  
Another Human Rights Lawyer Arrested...  
Prisons Conditions Remain Dire...  
RBZ Deputy Governor's Thugs Shoot Farm Workers...  
MDC Official Appears in Jail after Abduction and Torture...  
All Quiet on the Banking Front...  
Time for Another Indigenization Scare...  
Salary and Wagege\`Qk Cabinet. The Organ directed the parties to resolve outstanding issues, as contained in the Global Political Agreement and SADC Communiqu of January 27, within 30 days. The Organ also called for the lifting of all international sanctions. South Africa, represented by President Jacob Zuma who will travel to Harare next week, will facilitate the inter-party dialogue between ZANU-PF, MDC-T, and MDC-M. See Harare 885

[1](#)3. Warthogs Delay Ambassador's Arrival... This week we are thrilled to welcome Ambassador Charles A. Ray to Post. He arrived on November 4 after his November 3 arrival was delayed because of a bizarre accident hours earlier. On takeoff to Bulawayo on the afternoon of November 3, an Air Zimbabwe flight struck a group of about five warthogs and veered off the runway, destroying some of the runway lights. Passengers on the Air Zim flight were stuck in the plane for about two hours; security authorities forced passengers to surrender any photographic evidence of the crash before they were allowed to leave. All night flights on November 3, including Ambassador Ray's South African Airways flight from Johannesburg, were cancelled. The government did not comment on the warthogs' fate.

[1](#)4. ...And May Have Prevented Abduction of Labor Leader... The

Secretary General of the General Agriculture and Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ), Gertrude Hambira, was also scheduled to arrive in Harare on the cancelled November 3 flight. That night, a team of armed men in masks broke into her home, put a gun to her husband's head, and demanded to know where she was. They force-marched him through the house to look for her. When they discovered she was not there, they ransacked the home, stole photo albums and US\$100 and left. Hambira is now in hiding and other civil society leaders fear this may mean a new round of abductions similar to Jestina Mukoko's abduction and torture in December 2008.

¶5. Nkomo Nominated for VP Slot... The Herald is reporting that Q5. Nkomo Nominated for VP Slot... The Herald is reporting that former PF-ZAPU members who sit in ZANU-PF's Central Committee met on Thursday and nominated National Chairman John Nkomo to fill the post of Vice President, left vacant following the death of Vice President Joseph Msika in August. According to the 1987 Unity Accord, the position must be filled by someone who belonged to PF-ZAPU before the merger with ZANU-PF. Last week ZANU-PF's Politburo directed former PF-ZAPU members in the Central Committee to nominate a candidate to fill the vacant post.

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¶6. Zim Can Still Export Diamonds, With Greater Oversight... This week at the Kimberley Process plenary session in Namibia, the 37 members present agreed to a partial suspension of Zimbabwe's diamonds and a detailed work plan that will allow Zimbabwe to continue exporting diamonds from Chiadzwa, but only with the approval of a KP monitor. Local traditional leader, Newman Chiadzwa, surprised many by appearing in favor of the government when he read a letter to the plenary declaring that there had not been any rapes in Chiadzwa; previously he had spoken out against the government. We heard that he was escorted at the meeting by several suspected Zimbabwean intelligence officials. Civil society leader Farai Maguwu spoke out about the ongoing abuses; he was later berated by the Zimbabwean Ambassador to Namibia who accused him of "selling out" Zimbabwe. Human rights groups criticized the decision, saying it gives Zimbabwe a carte blanche for "business as usual."

¶7. Another Human Rights Lawyer Arrested... On November 2, Harare police, acting on instructions from Attorney General Johannes Tomana, arrested human rights and media lawyer Mordecai Mahlangu, who represents Peter Hitschmann in the upcoming Roy Bennett trial. Tomana subpoenaed Hitschmann to testify against MDC-T treasurer Roy Bennett on November 9, when he appears in court on insurgency, banditry, and terrorism charges. Hitschmann has said that he will not testify as he has no evidence to implicate Bennett. Mahlangu wrote Tomana and challenged the subpoena on the ground that the evidence attributed to Hitschmann was obtained through torture. Within hours of writing Tomana, police arrested Mahlangu at his office and charged him with obstruction of justice. He was detained overnight. The court granted him bail on November 3 and remanded him to November 16 for trial.

¶8. Prisons Conditions Remain Dire... Despite some dramatic improvements in food availability in prisons, conditions remain dire, particularly for women and juveniles. A Red Cross feeding program has reduced malnutrition in prisons, but some local NGOs continue to contend that prison conditions are far from acceptable. Although the government has allowed greater access to prisons than in years past, the prison system remains cloaked in secrecy. See Harare 879

¶9. RBZ Deputy Governor's Thugs Shoot Farm Workers... On October 29, "Tichiona," who works for RBZ Deputy Governor Edward Mashiringwani, shot and injured farm workers at Friedawil Farm in Mashonaland West. Reports indicate he hired thugs to evict workers from the contested farm. When they refused to heed his warning shot, he fired rubber bullets, injuring more than 10 workers. Two sustained deep cuts to their heads. Friedawil Farm is owned by Louis Fick, a South African citizen and Vice President of the Commercial Farmers' Union. Mashiringwani, protg of RBZ Governor Gideon Gono, has been waging QMashiringwani, protg of RBZ Governor Gideon Gono, has been waging a violent campaign to evict Fick. This week Fick requested urgent

help for his 1,000 pigs that have not been fed or watered in days.

¶10. MDC Official Appears in Jail after Abduction and Torture... On October 31, MDC Transport Manager Pascal Gwezere was taken to the Harare Remand Prison and to court, after being abducted on October 27. In the unusual Saturday court session, without the benefit of a lawyer present, Gwezere was charged with stealing 21 weapons from Pomona military barracks in Harare. He is due to appear in court again on November 13. During detention he was badly tortured and may have suffered a fractured rib. Throughout the week his lawyer has struggled to get court permission for access to a private medical doctor, but magistrates have refused, saying he should see a prison doctor. However, no doctor has yet attended to him.

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On the Economic and Business Front

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¶11. All Quiet on the Banking Front... A week has gone by since the press reported that the central bank had been spending the reserve deposits of the commercial banks. But so far, there have been no bank runs, and the bankers themselves seem not to be bothered by the news. Either they know something we don't, or they've become accustomed to life down the rabbit hole.

¶12. Time for Another Indigenization Scare... A ZANU-PF minister has been promoting a plan to give the GOZ authority to seize majority ownership of foreign-owned firms. Saviour Kasukuwere, Minister of Indigenization and Empowerment, recently met with bU[k]isxQQtation rules would only apply to new companies. As long as the MDC is in the government, Kasukuwere's proposed regulations will not be introduced. But even talk of implementing the Act is enough to make businesspeople nervous, and the inevitable headlines in the foreign press will be another reminder to the world that it is too early to invest in Zimbabwe.

¶13. Salary and Wage Negotiations Deadlocked... According to the Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ), most companies have failed to agree on salary and wage increases with their employees. EMCOZ told us that at a recent meeting held two weeks ago, employee representatives from the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions proposed a minimum wage equivalent to 60 percent of the USD 500/month poverty line. EMCOZ says employers are unable to meet such high wage demands. Instead, they propose to negotiate annual adjustments rather than the current quarterly adjustments in exchange for monthly salary increases based on productivity gains.

¶14. Sweet Deal for Sable Chemicals... Having closed their electrolysis factory a month ago due to high electricity tariffs, Zimbabwe's sole fertilizer manufacturer, Sable Chemicals, has re-opened its plant. According to the general manager, Sable Chemicals eventually managed to strike a deal with the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority for a lower tariff of US 3 cents per kilowatt hour instead of the normal US 7 cents paid by the other consumers. The development is set to improve the availability of fertilizers on the market.

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Quote of the Week

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"The countries of Europe and America want to dictate which way our politics should go and they talk about regime change. They want us to go down on our knees and beg. One day we should think about fighting them in the international courts."

-- President Robert Mugabe, speaking at a funeral at Heroes Acre on Q-- President Robert Mugabe, speaking at a funeral at Heroes Acre on October 31.

RAY